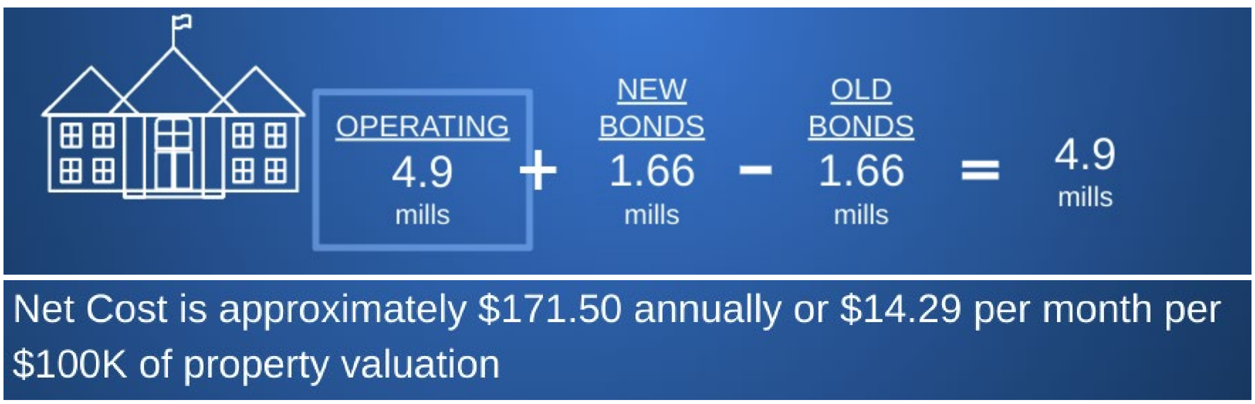
Levy FAQs

What is on the ballot?

On November 5th, Westerville residents will vote on a 4.9 mill Operating levy and a 1.66 mill Bond together as one issue on the ballot. The 1.66 mill bond portion of the issue will generate approximately $140 million over 37 years and will be structured so it does not increase property tax millage due to current bond millage that will soon expire.

What will this cost a Westerville homeowner?

- If approved, the total monthly cost of the combined issue to homeowners in the district would be an additional $19.17/month per $100,000 of valuation according to the County Auditor's appraised valuation (not Zillow or market).
- The bond issue will not cost homeowners a net increase in property taxes, as $4.83/month per $100,000 of appraised value from the previous bond are expiring.
- **The net monthly cost of the combined issue will be approximately $14.29/month per $100,000 of appraised value.**
- You can look up your appraised home value on the Franklin County Auditor's website here.
- You can look up your appraised home value on the Delaware County Auditor's website here.
- 4.9 mill continuous new money operating levy is expected to generate $20.8 million annually and the $140 million bond will be financed over 37 years.



What is the difference between appraised value and market value?

Real estate taxes are not paid on market value (Zillow etc.), they are paid on appraised value. Periodically the County auditor will reappraise the value of your property. 35% of that appraised value is what property taxes are based upon.

My taxes just went up from a reappraisal. Why does the school need more money?

The school district is prohibited from capturing any of that new revenue generated from the property value reappraisal due to House Bill 920, which precludes those dollars from going to schools unless the voters pass a new levy or bond issue. Both levies will be based upon your current appraised value and not your new appraised value.

Why is this levy needed?

The State of Ohio has underfunded Westerville City Schools by $44.5 million over the last five fiscal years while also expanding a voucher program, which shifts money from public to private schools, during the same time period. In addition, state law prohibits school districts from capturing new revenue from property tax reappraisals without passing new levies (see question #4).

There has also been:

- A reduction in federal funds. ESSER funds (covid relief) are expiring
- A reduction in state funding. In 2021 the state share of funding in Westerville was 43% and that has been reduced to just 23% by the 2025 school year.
- Inflationary cost increases
- A rise in student needs
- Increased need to provide support staff for English learners and a growing special education population.
- Increased need to be competitive with other area school systems to recruit and retain high quality staff to teach and support all students.

Why is this Bond needed?

Bond revenue from the November 2024 issue will be used for repairs, renovations and additions to Cherrington Elementary, Huber Ridge Elementary, Blendon Middle School and Walnut Springs Middle School. These schools opened during the 1960s and require upgrades, renovations and/or additions to support a 21st century education for students.

The bond (along with other existing resources) will also fund renovations and construction of additional preschool classrooms at the district's Early Learning Center; stadium storage/operational support spaces and performing arts facility improvements, including equipment/system updates to auditoriums and music spaces, at each high school; playground and parking lot repairs and improvements across the district; and continuing safety and security updates across the district.

What will happen if the levy doesn't pass?

If the levy does not pass, identified facility projects would be delayed and district officials would need to evaluate how to address an additional $20.8 million operating revenue shortfall to submit a balanced budget to the state.